Many people believe that countries should produce food for the whole population and import as little food as possible. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

In a hyper-connected world, ~~which~~ where international frontiers have been diminished by modern technology, tastes are evolving and consumers are not satisfied with only their conventional food anymore. Many, however, see food independence as a high priority due to the relative benefits it provides, but I do not share their view, nonetheless.

First, there are some reasons behind the rise in demand for food imports which are worth mentioning. Initially, thanks to the rapid development of the freight transport industry, air travel has become an economic form of transport, ~~thereby~~ hence the subsequent drop in the cost of importing. These days, for many countries, those which lack an efficient local agrarian system in particular, growing food makes far less economic sense as long as it can come from abroad. As a fine example, Saudi Arabia, covered in deserts, finds domestic~~al~~ food production nowhere close to financially prudent. Meanwhile, technical advances in the food processing industry ~~has~~ have removed the obstacles in the way of preserving it such as fresh vegetables and fruit for a longer time, making imports, exports and shipments across oceans and continents a feasible option.

The arguments against this trend are primarily focused on the issue of national independence and economy, however. A domestically food-dependent country is believed to enjoy a thriving economy as food production can positively affect agriculture and other industries which often go hand in hand to reduce unemployment and poverty. Furthermore, it is argued that food self-efficiency can safeguard a nation against foreign threats. Highly dependent on others, a country will constantly feel the sword of Damocles hung over such that they might stop providing a food supply for it.

Nevertheless, I believe such arguments are flawed since the definition of self-sufficiency has changed over time. Food dependence comes down to whether a country can feed its people, not whether it actually is. The obstinacy to grow and consume food domestically will only make a nation suffer economically and environmentally. Through lack of healthy competition, prices will soar astronomically which in turn may lead to more serious maladies for a society such as a monopoly and financial impotency.

In conclusion, although food self-sufficiency indeed brings advantages, bigotry against importing food has no place in this day and age.